



Northumberland County Council

Accessible Information: Guidance

If you need this information in Large Print, Braille, Audio, or in another format or language please contact us:

Telephone: 0845 600 6400 see website for local numbers

Fax: 01670 620 223

Text phone: 01670 542999

Text Relay: 18001 0845 600 6400

Email: Irene.fisher@northumberland.gov.uk

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1. Northumberland County Council's Accessible Information Guidance

This guidance provides guidelines to make information accessible to everyone.
This includes:

- ☐ The public
- ☐ Staff
- ☐ Elected Members
- ☐ Partner organisations.

The guidance has been written both for staff and elected Members in the Council. The guidance will be made available to members of the public and shared with partners.

This guidance provides an overall framework for people to access information from us through:

- ☐ Printed information
- ☐ Electronic information
- ☐ Face to face contact
- ☐ Telephone

We will cover access to information including:

- ☐ Alternative formats
- ☐ Translators
- ☐ Interpreters
- ☐ Other support for people at meetings.

Our guidance aims to make accessible services and information:

- ☐ Straightforward
- ☐ Part of the Council's day to day work.

This guidance provides an overall framework. Some of our services may require additional service specific guidance. Where this is the case the appropriate Directorate should develop more detailed guidance, based on this guidance.

1.1 Information is a right

This guidance recognises that every member of the public has a right to access our services. As an employer, service provider and local authority we have a duty to make our information as accessible as possible.

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on Northumberland County Council to provide information in alternative formats as a reasonable adjustment for disabled people and to provide key information in alternative languages where there is a need for this.

1.2 How this will make a difference for the public

Our guidance is committed to making information and services available:

- ☐ To individuals
- ☐ On request
- ☐ With minimum delay
- ☐ Via translators and interpreters
- ☐ In alternative formats
- ☐ In alternative media.

1.3 Accessibility and Council policies

Our Corporate Plan sets out for the public our key goals and our values as a local authority. Promoting equality is one of our key values and this guidance helps make us more accessible to everyone in Northumberland.

This guidance is part of our approach to equality and diversity.

In Northumberland we have additional challenges to overcome barriers to accessing information in both rural and urban areas. To make our approach to equality and diversity effective we have to work towards improving access to services and information for everyone.

1.4 Commitment to accessibility

All our new policies must include the following statement at the beginning in Arial 18 font:

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Email: Irene.fisher@northumberland.gov.uk

2. Accessing Interpreters and Translators

This part focuses on making services accessible to people whose first language is not written or spoken English.

2.1 Access to interpreters

Interpreters are needed where a person finds that communicating in English is a barrier to getting the information, advice or service they need. We have the following responsibilities regarding interpreters:

- ☐ To provide them on request.
- ☐ To only use them with a person's consent.

2.2 How to get an interpreter

Check appendix 2 for our preferred interpreters. If you are a member of staff or an elected Member, and you need an interpreter, you should ensure you are aware of arrangements for placing an order and providing a budget code in your service. Each order should include details of the language requested. It is up to you to contact the supplier to place the order. Each service should have arrangements in place to:

- ☐ Monitor requests for interpreters.
- ☐ Check for key languages, issues, localities and services.
- ☐ Use data to inform guidance, and partnership working.
- ☐ Keep track of the changing patterns of languages spoken in the county.

2.3 Accessing a British Sign Language interpreter

British Sign Language (BSL) is now recognised as a language in its own right and there is a Northumberland dialect which can differ from standard BSL by up to 20%.

It is good practice to check if the customer has a preferred BSL interpreter and arrange to use this interpreter if possible if the customer can supply contact details. If the customer does not have a preferred interpreter or it is not possible to book the interpreter use our preferred supplier please see Appendix 2.

The order arrangements are as set out in 2.6. Further information on the use of BSL interpreters and information on the needs of Deaf customers who use BSL are contained within Appendix 3

2.4 Interpretation Telephone Line

This is a service that provides telephone based interpretation. All Council Groups have access to this Line, which they can use if someone rings up who does not speak English, or finds it easier to communicate in their first language.

Council Groups pay for use of the service. The service can produce statistical information on service use that can be broken down to Groups.

When using the telephone service you ring then quote your purchase order number. Then you will be put through to a telephone interpreter in the language you have requested. Guidance on the use of telephone interpreters is available in Appendix 4 and training for staff in using this service is available on request. The cost of this service will be charged to the service.

2.5 Text Relay and text phoning

We can use Text Relay (previously called Type Talk) to contact customers who use a Minicom or text phone. These customers can also use this service to contact us. This service connects you to a typist who will convert your spoken message into a format that can be read by someone with a hearing impairment. The typist will type exactly what you say so try to speak as if you are talking directly to the person you are contacting. For example say "Hello Mr Brown I am returning your call" not "can you tell Mr Brown I am returning his call?" Speak clearly and use plain English to improve communication. Please allow for some delays in establishing a connection and getting a response do not hang up if there is a pause as it may take additional time for someone to type and read what you are saying. To use Text Relay from a telephone to contact a customer with a Textphone dial 18002 followed by the phone number of the person you are calling.

We also provide a Northumberland County Council Textphone number for customers who have hearing or speech impairments to contact the Council this number is 01670 542 999. We should include this number on documents and leaflets as part of the how to get information in alternative formats statement and where we are listing ways to contact the Council.

2.6 Translators

At any point in time someone may want a document translated into a language other than English. Costs for translations should be met by the service that is providing the information in the first place.

The following should be considered before arranging for information to be translated into another language:

- ☐ Is it essential to translate this information or would it be better to arrange for an interpreter to explain the information to the person?
- ☐ If you feel it is essential that the information is translated into written form, does it need to be the whole document? Are you confident that people across communities have the literacy skills to understand the document? Would it be better to translate an easy-read or summary version of the document? Or would it be better to translate a version that is tailored to the particular needs of the individual?
- ☐ Have you explored whether other local agencies might already have these materials in translated form?
- ☐ If it is essential that the person is able to understand the information particularly in situations which could affect their rights, such as benefit investigations, evictions or disciplinary situations it is particularly important that people receive information in a format that is accessible to them.

Appendix 2 provides the contact details for our preferred suppliers. These organisations can provide a proof reading service for a small extra charge. Often this means a second translator reviewing what the first translator has written. For quality we recommend proof reading of translated texts before they are sent to the person who has requested them.

Services are responsible for paying for translations. Prices vary depending on the length of document. If translating a document into several languages the invoice will be for each language.

3. Protocol on using Interpreters and Translators

This section provides overview guidance on using interpreters including:

- ☐ Referral
- ☐ Confidentiality
- ☐ People providing their own interpreters
- ☐ Conducting meetings with an interpreter present
- ☐ Emergency situations.

This protocol reflects the scope of the entire County Council. Key services provided to children and vulnerable adults will need to develop more specific protocols

3.1 Referral

Where the Council has an agreement with an agency providing interpreters, it is important that referrals are made in accordance with referral policies of those agencies.

3.2 Confidentiality

Staff should ensure that interpreters sign a written undertaking that they will keep confidential all information being translated or interpreted. A template for this has been attached as an Appendix to this guidance (Appendix 4)

3.3 Using approved interpreters

Where possible we should use interpreters who are qualified and independent. Where a person insists on using friends, relatives and local contacts, we will agree if there is no concern about conflicts of interest. For services where there is a fundamental conflict of interest in using friends, relatives or contractors, the service should develop a protocol in line with its service needs. These protocols may extend the guidance in this paragraph to only using qualified interpreters.

3.4 At the beginning of the meeting

At the beginning of the meeting, all parties must be clear about:

- ☐ The identity of the people involved.
- ☐ The purpose of the meeting.
- ☐ How long the meeting is likely to last.
- ☐ Any difficult language or concepts.
- ☐ How the initial introductions will be carried out.

3.5 Tips in carrying out a meeting

- ☐ Gesture towards and make eye contact with the person, not their interpreter.
- ☐ Give time for the interpreter to summarise to the person.
- ☐ Expect the interpreter to summarise back any exchanges in the person's language between the customer and the interpreter or any other people present.
- ☐ Be prepared to pause for the interpreter, particularly if they are signing.
- ☐ Be prepared to clarify difficult terminology or concepts.
- ☐ Check that the interpreter understands the questions asked and that the person has understood correctly.
- ☐ Be alert to non-verbal communication.
- ☐ Be prepared for the person or the interpreter to take a break in the meeting, particularly if it is stressful.

3.6 In emergencies

In emergencies you may have to act immediately in situations where communication is difficult.

Some services will need to develop emergency provision for accessing interpreters and include it in their protocols.

4. Accessible Information: Using Plain Language

Plain language is about making sure that everything we write is clear to read.

4.1 Definition of Plain English

The Plain English Campaign defines Plain English as:

'Something that the intended audience can read, understand and act upon the first time they read it'.

The Plain English Campaign list what they consider plain language to be:

- ☐ Using short words that are commonly used.
- ☐ Using 'you' and 'we'.
- ☐ Not being afraid to give instructions.
- ☐ Using positive language.
- ☐ Avoiding jargon.

- ☐ Explaining what acronyms stand for, such as Citizen's Advice Bureau instead of CAB.
- ☐ Using words rather than abbreviations or symbols, for example care of, not c/o.
- ☐ Keeping sentences and paragraphs short (aim for maximum sentences of 15-20 words).
- ☐ Using headings to break up writing.
- ☐ Explaining any technical terms you have to use.
- ☐ Avoiding long-winded sentences.
- ☐ Using the active voice, 'I will eat jelly', rather than the passive voice, 'jelly will be eaten by me'.
- ☐ Choosing a photograph, diagram or illustration to replace long written descriptions.
- ☐ Only using basic punctuation. , ; : / ()
- ☐ Avoiding phrases such as inter alia and raison d'être, where an English equivalent can be used.

You can find more information at: <http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/plainenglishguide.html>

5. Accessible Information: Keeping documents Clear

Clear print is a design that takes into account a wider audience.

5.1 Type size

The minimum corporate font size is Arial 12 this should be set as the default size for letters, emails etc. If a customer requests a response in a different font size we should do this.. See 5.11 on Large Print guidance.

5.2 Type weight

Medium or bold weight fonts are more accessible than light ones.

5.3 Typeface

Our Corporate Identity guidance states that we should use the following typefaces:

- ☐ Arial for day to day use.
- ☐ Gill Sans for printed publications
- ☐ Verdana on web pages.

Simulated handwriting and elaborate typefaces are difficult to read and should not be used.

5.4 Contrast

- Aim for a clear colour contrast. Black text on a white background and **strong blue text on a yellow background** provides the best contrast for some visually impaired people. Some types of colour contrast can be helpful for people who have dyslexia the contrast required will vary for different people but generally an off white background colour has been shown in studies to make text easier for people with dyslexia to read. Some further information on meeting the needs of people with dyslexia is contained in the section on Learning disabilities.
- It is important to ask a person what their requirements are as what works for one person will not necessarily work for another.
- Avoid using ink which is a darker tone of the same colour as the paper. People with colour blindness may have problems distinguishing **reds** or **greens**. Europe has a higher percentage of people who are colour blind than the rest of the world and this condition is much more common in men. In Northumberland it is estimated that 10-12% of men and less than 1% of women are colour blind.

5.5 Using paper

- Avoid using glossy paper because the glare makes it difficult to read.
- Choose uncoated paper or matt.
- Thin paper should not be used when printing your document on both sides.
- If the text is showing through from the reverse side, then the paper is too thin.
- Remember that bold and large text is more like to show through.
- Choose paper with a minimum density of 90 GSM.

5.6 Type styles

Avoid sentences in CAPITAL LETTERS. CAPITAL LETTERS, *italics* and underlined text are generally harder to read. **Bold** is more accessible, but only in small amounts.

5.7 Page layout and word spacing

To make a document accessible:

- Keep the same space between each word.
- Do not condense or s t r e t c h words.
- Try not to write more than 60-70 letters per line.
- Do not split words at the end of lines.

- ☐ Align text to the left margin so it is easy to find the start and finish of each line.
- ☐ Avoid justified text as it creates uneven spacing between words.
- ☐ Break information down into sections with titles and sub titles.

5.8 Navigational aids

It is good practice to use number headings and paragraphs in long documents and use a contents list to guide readers to sections and pages. It is also helpful to place clear page numbers in the same position on each page.

Leaving a space between paragraphs makes reading easier.

5.9 Illustrations

Do not write letters over pictures.

5.10 Watermarks

Do not use a watermark. If a text is a draft, this can be stated in large bold print at the beginning of the document, or the top of each page.

5.11 Large Print

- ☐ Large print documents must be made available on request.
- ☐ RNIB defines large print as a minimum font size of point 16.
- ☐ Action for Blind People recommends Point 16 – Point 22. It is best to ask people what size they would like, as no single size suits everyone.
- ☐ With long documents it is best to ask the person whether they want all or part of a document made available in large print. In some cases they may only want a summary.

6. Information in alternative formats

The Council has a responsibility to make available materials in alternative formats. Our system for ordering information in alternative formats and current contacts are attached in Appendix 2.

6.1 Electronic information

Electronically held information can be adapted or translated before being sent out. In some cases readers will have adaptations to their computers so all they will need is an email or CD-ROM.

6.2 Coloured Paper

Printing material in a different colour or onto coloured paper can help some readers with dyslexia and some sight conditions.

6.3 Audio and CD

When putting information onto audio you should commission a professional firm to do it to ensure the information is of good quality. Preferred supplier is listed in appendix 2.

6.4 Braille

Some people prefer or need information in Braille. 25% of people with a visual impairment also have a hearing impairment check whether the person prefers information on audio, CD or Braille our current supplier of information in Braille is in Appendix 2

6.5 Easy Read

Easy Read (also known as Easy Word, Easy write or Easy info) is about making written information easier to understand. Easy Read documents have short, simple sentences often with pictures.

Easy Read documents are used to make information more accessible to people with learning disabilities. They can also be useful for people with other communication needs including:

- ☐ acquired brain injury
- ☐ dyslexia
- ☐ people with hearing impairment whose first language is British Sign Language (BSL)
- ☐ people who do not speak English as their first language
- ☐ people who find reading difficult.

Easy Read documents will not meet the needs of everyone who has difficulties in reading and understanding written information. Easy Read documents will:

- ☐ allow some people to access the information independently
- ☐ provide a useful tool for support workers when working with individuals or groups.

Easy Read documents are can be useful in helping people understand information.

There are two main types of Easy Read documents.

Group 1: for the general population

This includes documents that will be used by a lot of people and may be an easy version of a more complex document. Example: an easy read version of the Equality Act 2010.

Or,

the easy read version may be the only one produced. Example: a voluntary organisation supporting adults with a learning disability decides to make all its documents easy read

Group 2: personalised

These include documents written for one person or, a small group of people. For example, people who share the same house. The words will be about that person or group and the pictures may be photographs of people and places that they know. Example a plan explaining the kind of support a person needs.

6.6 Translation

Translation is a way to make documents accessible to people who read in other languages. But using plain English and Easy Read Formats can make information more accessible for people from a range of different groups including people with low literacy levels, learning disability and English as a second language and reduce the need for information in other languages.

There are small numbers of people from a wide range of national groups in Northumberland. The ethnic diversity of Northumberland has increased and there are 57 different first languages spoken by children in Northumberland schools. There have been changes in the most frequently spoken languages in Northumberland.

An Analysis of the use of Interpreting Services (NIS) by Health & Social Care Professionals in Northumberland showed that the total number of bookings in 2009/10 in Northumberland by primary care and social care services was 482.

The most requested languages in descending order were; Polish (54 %), Bengali (8%), Mandarin (6%), Russian (6%), Cantonese (5%), Portuguese (5%), Czech (4%), Thai (4%), Urdu (3%), Lithuanian (2%) and Romanian (2%).

There were some differences between local areas in the pattern of languages requested.

Staff receiving a request for a translator should follow the same procedure as when they receive a request for an interpreter. This is outlined above in the section 2.6.

6.7 British Sign Language in Video clips

British Sign Language is recognised by government as a language in its own right and should be treated on a par with Urdu, French or any other language. The best way to make documents accessible in British Sign Language is to pay for a BSL/English version of the document to be produced. This can then be used as a video, DVD or on a computer. BSL captioning should be added to DVD's or videos you are commissioning

6.8 Using pictorial information

Many people may find information easier to understand if text is supported by illustrations. These could include:

- ☐ Photos,
- ☐ Flow charts
- ☐ Tables
- ☐ Diagrams.

Key points to remember when illustrating a printed text.

- ☐ Make sure the text is in plain language.
- ☐ Make sure the font is a large size.
- ☐ Use Change Picture Bank for general documents.

Change Picture Bank is a CD with a set of symbols you can use to support a plain language text.

6.9 People with Learning Disabilities

MENCAP provide helpful information on how to make printed information accessible for people with learning disabilities and literacy difficulties:

http://www.mencap.org.uk/download/making_myself_clear.pdf

By following Plain English guidance and the guidance below for people with learning disabilities you will increase the accessibility of the information you produce for the majority of people not just those people who have learning difficulties. Around ten percent of people have some degree of dyslexia. Dyslexic people read and process information differently and may have difficulty reading text. Minor adjustments can be very effective at making information accessible for people with dyslexia. You may be asked to provide information in a different format e.g. audio or CD or to change the colour contrast of a document to make it easier for that person to read.

- Plan what you want to say and the key messages you want to use. Always ask yourself what your audience needs to know. Cut out confusing detail and keep it simple.
- Include more appropriate images and icons to help understanding. Place them at the side of your text to emphasise the message you want to put across (Please see example attached)
- Write in short sentences and use plain English. Do not use jargon or abbreviations.
- Use simple punctuation and avoid semi colons, colons, hyphens or too many sentences broken down by commas.
- Use Clear Print guidelines.
- Use bullet points or fact boxes to make main points stand out and clear
- Where suitable video can be used.
- People with dyslexia may prefer to read from lightly coloured paper, shades of blue or green paper are generally the most favoured while some people prefer off-white/cream/pale peach colours as they reduce glare. The individual will tell what their particular needs are. Standard black text is usually fine and should be at least size 12 Arial font. This font is NCC's corporate font for letters and emails because this font is one of the easiest to read for most people. Avoid italicised font, capitalised words and always use sans serif fonts.

7. Frequently Asked Questions

Producing documents

Question 1: What if the document has statistics and diagrams?

If someone has requested a document in audio or Braille, let them know about the statistics and diagrams, and ask if they would like these read out aloud, or translated into Braille. Offer for someone to meet and explain any diagrams or statistics. Lastly if using pictures and diagrams on websites, always make sure that a caption appears when someone hovers a mouse over the picture. If someone is using a text only version, the caption should appear in the text that explains the picture.

Question 2: What if the document is aimed at a broad public?

All documents for general and large-scale distribution should be designed to reach the widest possible audience. It is important to plan for producing them in alternative formats from the very beginning. When planning budgets for documents it is important to build in the costs of translation and conversion to alternative formats.

Question 3: What if the document needs checking for accessibility?

Seek advice from local, regional and national organisations on the accessibility of the document. Also check the document against this guidance.

Question 4: Where should copies in translation and alternative formats be available from?

The County Council Website is a critical place to store information in alternative formats. This can include British Sign Language video clips, as well as documents in other languages. In addition libraries, schools, community centres and targeted voluntary sector organisations can store information in translation and alternative formats. The Northumberland County council alternative format statement to tell members of the public how to request information in alternative formats should be included on all public documents.

Appendix 1: National guidance

Accessibility guides

Learning disabilities: Mencap

http://www.mencap.org.uk/html/accessibility/accessibility_guides.asp

Visual impairments/blindness: RNIB

http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/PublicWebsite/public_seeitright.hcsp

Hearing impairments/deafness: RNID

http://www.rnid.org.uk/information_resources/communicating_better/

Plain English: Accessibility guide

Plain English Campaign

<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/guides.html>

Further information on dyslexia is available from:

The British Dyslexia Association:

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/>

Writing for the Web

Research on how users read on the Web and how to write effective web

pages <http://www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/>

Aphasia is a life-disabling condition caused by damage to the language centres of the brain. Aphasia can be caused by a stroke, head injury, brain injury or other neurological condition intellectual capacity is rarely affected to find out more about communicating with someone with Aphasia see link below

http://www.speakability.org.uk/Aphasia+Information/speakability_aphasia_information

Northumberland Life is a directory of community organisations, support groups and organisations in Northumberland

www.northumberlandlife.org/

Appendix 2: Northumberland County Council system for ordering accessible information and preferred suppliers

Information in other formats/languages will be ordered and paid for by the service that produced the original document.

For alternative formats e.g. Large Print, Braille, Audio, and Easyword, the current supplier is:

MPH Accessible media

The Media Centre
Stonehills
Shields Road
Gateshead
NE10 0HW

Tel: 0191 438 6063

Fax: 0191 438 1122

Text Relay: 018001 0191 438 6063

Email: enquiries@mph-uk.com

For Translation/telephone or face to face interpreters in other languages the current supplier is:

Interpreting Translation Line

Design Works
William Street,
Felling,
Gateshead,
Tyne and Wear,
NE10 OJP
UK

Tel: 0845 055 2197

FAX: 0845 055 2198 / 0191 469 0589

E-mail: info@interpretingline.co.uk

Text Relay: 018001 0845 055 2197

In case of emergencies, during out of office hours you can also contact the following key staff: Mob: 0797 0675737 (Grace), 0798 9660550 (Richard)

For British Sign Language interpreters the current contact is:

For British Sign Language interpreters if possible ask the client if they have a preferred interpreter and ask for the contact details - if preferred interpreter is not available contact:

Becoming Visible

Newcastle Deaf
Centre
2 Summerhill Grove
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE4 6EE

Telephone: 0191 233 0999

Fax: 0191 233 1334

Out of hours mobile: 0781 449 7084

Email: communication@becomingvisible.co.uk

Office Hours: 8.30am - 4.30pm (Mon - Fri)

Appendix 3:

Using British sign language interpreters (BSL/English interpreters)

A BSL/English interpreter can help a sign language user and a hearing person to communicate. They interpret from one language to the other. In the UK this will usually be from British Sign Language (BSL) to spoken or written English, or spoken or written English to BSL. Interpreting is a recognised profession and interpreters train for many years. They need a good level of English, relevant qualifications in BSL, and they should have completed approved interpreter training. BSL/English interpreters are used by people who are deaf and:

- ☐ Whose first or preferred language is BSL, or
- ☐ Who use Sign Supported English (SSE).

What is video interpreting?

Video interpreting allows you to access an interpreter over a video link. Video interpreting is not a replacement for face-to-face interpreting, but it is useful if you need an interpreter at short notice or for brief appointments. Anyone with access to a webcam or videophone can use a video interpreter. Some councils, hospitals and police stations offer a video interpreting service. Video interpreting is particularly useful for short meetings or appointments up to 30 minutes long. It is not suitable in sensitive situations where a misunderstanding could have serious results, such as during legal, disciplinary or child protection meetings.

What kind of interpreter should I get?

Use someone who is registered with The National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind People (NRCPD). See www.nrcpd.org.uk

They should be registered as a:

- ☐ Member of the Register of Sign Language Interpreters (MRSLI)
- ☐ Trainee Interpreter (TI), or a
- ☐ Junior Trainee Interpreter (JTI).

Make sure that the interpreter has the right qualifications and experience for the assignment. In some situations – for example, legal and mental health bookings – you should only use MRSLIs. Try to book one who knows about special terms or words that may be used (for instance, in situations that have legal implications such as benefit fraud interviews or disciplinary hearings you will need an MRSLI interpreter (preferably one with legal terminology).

Code of conduct

MRSLLs, TIs and JTIs follow a strict code of conduct and guidelines for professional practice. Everything that is said in an assignment is strictly confidential. They will not give advice or opinions while working with you.

How many interpreters should I book?

When you make a booking ask for advice on whether you will need one or two interpreters. For an event such as a full day conference, with few breaks between speakers and where presentations are highly technical, you will need two interpreters. For a two-hour meeting between two people you will usually need just one interpreter. Interpreting can be very tiring, even for an expert, so they need enough breaks throughout the day to provide a professional and accurate service. Do not expect them to work through lunch and coffee breaks, unless you have agreed this with them beforehand.

Working with interpreters face-to-face

Preparation material

Try to send the interpreter or the agency copies of any papers, teaching materials or other information at least two weeks before the assignment, so that they know what to expect and can prepare as much as they can for it.

Videos and DVDs

If you are intending to show a video or DVD try to show it to the interpreter before the assignment starts.

Other Tips:

- ☐ Make time to discuss the interpreter's role before the start of the meeting.
- ☐ Speak directly to the Deaf person, not to the interpreter.
- ☐ Negotiate seating arrangements before you start to make sure the Deaf person and the interpreter can see each another.
- ☐ Keep background noise to a minimum so the interpreter can hear the discussion.
- ☐ In meetings, ensure that there is only one speaker at a time and that they are clearly identified
- ☐ Provide the interpreter with background information and, if possible, copies of written material well before the meeting to give time for preparation.

- Remember the Interpreter will interpret everything that is said or signed (even audible asides).
- Book more than one Interpreter if the meeting is in a formal setting and lasts more than an hour.

DO NOT:

- Expect an Interpreter to work continuously for more than 30 - 45 minutes. Allow for regular breaks.
- Ask the Interpreter to make any independent input to the meeting. The Interpreter remains neutral.
- Ask the Interpreter for personal details while he/she is interpreting.

Working with a video interpreter

Before using a video interpreter, make sure your videophone or webcam equipment is installed and working correctly. For the best picture quality, try to ensure that the background behind the videophone or webcam is as plain as possible. Make sure people are not moving around in the background. Good lighting is also important to avoid shadows or silhouettes. You may need to sign or speak more slowly when using a video interpreter.

How much do interpreters charge?

Interpreters' costs, travel expenses and minimum call-out charges vary, so check these when you book.

Appendix 4: Using telephone interpreters

Interpreting Line Telephone Service

- 1. Contact the interpreting line on 0845 055 8197 and the operator will ask you for the following questions:**
 - ☐ Your organisation's name and your Department name and if possible your department's purchase order number (if you do not have this at the time you can ring back after the call has finished and provide this).
 - ☐ Required language (if the client prefers a female interpreter, please let the operator know).
 - ☐ General subject of the conversation (this helps our telephone interpreter prepare mentally for the subject matter)
- 2. Stay on the line while the operator connects you to a trained interpreter (takes a couple of seconds)**
 - ☐ Please speak directly to the client. Continue the conversation normally, giving the interpreter time to interpret your words to your client.
 - ☐ Let the client and interpreter know when you are finished
- 3. END. We then enter the sec/min onto our database for invoicing**

Appendix 5: Template for Confidentiality Agreement with interpreters

Interpreter's name:

I have read Northumberland County Council's protocol set out in the
Accessible Information Guidance.

I agree to keep confidential anything I hear when working as an interpreter
for Northumberland County Council or anyone engaging with the council.

Signed:

Date:/...../.....

